

the black-headed white Ibis, which he found in China, and which has since been obtained in Japan, to be a new species, although it now appears that he was in error in so doing. Jerdon described the Indian species as having the disintegrated tertials quaker-grey, and erroneously stated that the quills were black. The skin in my collection, obtained in Yedo in the summer of 1874, has some of the quills tipped with black; the tertials are less developed than in examples from India in summer plumage, and there is very little trace of grey upon them. It is nevertheless a very large bird, much larger than the examples in the British Museum, before the arrival of the Hume Collection. I have now had an opportunity of comparing it with a larger series, and I have no doubt of the identity of the Indian and Burmese birds with those of China and Japan. In size it does not differ from the largest examples in the Hume Collection, and I have little doubt that the black tips of some of the quills are signs of comparative youth, as they are in the Spoonbills. It is probably in first summer plumage, and would have acquired the more developed richer-coloured tertials and lost the black tips to the quills in the following year.

The following table of dimensions shows the variations in size of this species :—

	Length of wing. in.	Length of tarsus. in.
Yedo, Japan	14 $\frac{3}{4}$	4·2
N.-West Prov. India, ♂ ad.	14 $\frac{1}{2}$	4·4
Centr. Prov. India	14 $\frac{1}{2}$	4·0
Centr. Prov. India, ♂ ad.	14 $\frac{1}{2}$	3·9
N.-West Prov. India, juv.	14 $\frac{1}{4}$	4·1
Upper Tenasserim, ♂ im.	14	4·3
Centr. Prov. India, ♀ ad.	13	3·5
Pegu, ♂ ad.	13 $\frac{1}{2}$	3·6
Delhi, India, ♂ juv.	12 $\frac{1}{2}$	3·7

L.—Notes on some Species of *Zosterops*.

By ALFRED and EDWARD NEWTON.

CANON TRISTRAM having kindly submitted to us the type-specimen of *Zosterops prætermisssa*, described and figured in

'The Ibis' for 1887 (p. 370, pl. xi. fig. 1), we feel bound to state that our good friend has, most unfortunately, been mistaken concerning it. It is beyond all doubt that this specimen (with the history of which, now that we have had an opportunity of recognizing it, we are perfectly acquainted) was originally received by one of us from Mr. Bewsher *in spirit*, and was, along with some others from the same collection, which were sold at Mr. Stevens's rooms at the same time (25th of October, 1881), skinned by Mr. Burton of Wardour Street. We have at present ten or a dozen more specimens, sent in the same bottle, which have been recently skinned by Mr. Cullingford, of the Durham Museum, and these show that the greater length of time that they have been immersed has had the effect of discharging still more of the colour of their plumage. But, after a careful examination, we have no hesitation in declaring that all these "victims of alcohol" are nothing more nor less than examples of *Z. anjuanensis* (Proc. Zool. Soc. 1877, p. 297, pl. xxxiii. fig. 1).

The Canon has also lent us the type-specimen of his *Z. ho-varum* (Ibis, 1887, pp. 235, 370, pl. xi. fig. 2). If this really be from Madagascar, there can be little doubt that he is right in deeming it a good species, hitherto undescribed; but we think it due to the readers of 'The Ibis' to state, which we do with much regret, that the colouring of the figure of this species, as well as of the so-called *Z. prætermissa*, is so incorrect, that recognition from the plate would be impossible.

While on the subject of species of *Zosterops*, we think it advisable to notice that Mr. Sharpe (Cat. B. Brit. Mus. ix. p. 196) refuses to admit the validity of one described some years since by Dr. Hartlaub from specimens in our collection. Mr. Sharpe grounds his objection on the fact that the "British Museum series" of specimens makes it evident that "a perfect gradation" exists between Dr. Hartlaub's *Z. e.-newtoni* (Vögel Madagascars u. s. w. p. 97) and the long-known *Z. borbonica*. We must own to not having had the advantage of studying the "British Museum series" of the latter; but since it admittedly consists of no more than three examples—one adult female and two young—it seems somewhat inade-

quate to justify the abrupt dismissal of Dr. Hartlaub's conclusions, arrived at after the examination of at least thrice as many specimens from our own collection, in addition to such as he may have had at his disposal from other quarters. All the more inadequate does Mr. Sharpe's decision seem, when we find him wholly ignoring other differentiating characters duly pointed out by Dr. Hartlaub, and accounting for the discrepancy in tint by putting forth the suggestion that *Z. borbonica* undergoes a seasonal change of plumage, though he assigns no evidence in support of such a state of things, which would be highly interesting if it were proved to exist.

10th August, 1888.

LI.—On two new Species of Starlings.

By R. BOWDLER SHARPE, F.L.S. &c.

THE Oriental Starlings, such as *S. cineraceus*, *S. sericeus*, and their allies, have usually been included in the genus *Sturnus*, or have fluctuated between *Sturnia* and *Temenuchus*. As a matter of fact they do not belong to any of these genera. The type of *Sturnia* of Lesson is *S. sinensis*, which has usually been placed under *Heterornis* of Gray, a genus which is long posterior in date to *Sturnia*. The true Starlings (*Sturnus*) are remarkable for their flattened bill and the bare operculum of the nostril. They have the wing long and pointed, thus differing from *Sturnopastor*, which has, moreover, a bare patch behind the eye.

In the grey-headed eastern group, for which I here propose the name of *Poliopsar*, the anterior plumulets of the forehead are continued over the nasal membrane, and the much more acute and narrow bill at once distinguishes these birds from *Sturnus*.

The following species belong to my new genus:—1. *P. sericeus* (Gm.); 2. *P. cineraceus* (Temm.); 3. *P. colletti*, Sharpe; 4. *P. cambodianus*, Sharpe; 5. *P. burmanicus* (Jerd.); 6. *P. leucocephalus* (Gigl. & Salvad.); 7. *P. andamanensis* (Beavan); 8. *P. erythropygius* (Blyth); 9. *P. malabaricus* (Gm.); 10. *P. nemoricola* (Jerd.); 11. *P. blythi* (Jerd.).